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224 In the good old days conditions were quite different. Naturally there was occasional hunger when the hunters' luck failed them,[39] but game formed the chief food supply, vegetable dishes being ancillary. If a single hunter failed, a party would encircle a bit of the steppe with fire, leaving a gap for the hunters, who would club or shoot the fugitive beasts so far as they had not yet been overcome by the smoke and heat. Nowadays both the ubiquitous livestock of the Neobrazilians and the smallness of the remaining area bar this technique.

262 136 Normally all mammals rank as edible. The steppes and *galeria* forests of the Rąmkõ'kamekra still harbor the following: four species of deer (*Mazama* sp.); the fox (*Canis brasiliensis*); agouti (*Dasyprocta aguti*); paca (*Coelogenys paca*); cavy = pereá (*Cavia* sp.); two species of wild pig (*Dicotyles labiatus, D. torquatus*); two species of anteater (*Myrmecophaga jubata, M. tetradactyla*); four species of armadillo (*Dasypus* sp.); two species of opossum (*Didelphys* sp.); the porcupine (*Coerolabes* sp.); the skunk (*Memphitis suffocans*); steppe rats (*Muridae* ?); bats (*Chiropterus* sp.); very rarely, the coati (*Nasua* sp.); monkeys (*Cebus apella*); small hares (*Sylvilagus brasiliensis*); wildcats (*Felis pardalis*); and pumas (*Felis concolor*). Though the number of these species is fairly considerable, not one of them is at all abundant enough for dependence on it as a constant source of food.

All birds are eaten except the carrion vultures (*Catharistes urubú*, Vieill.; *Carthartes aura*, Linn.); the king vulture (*Gypagus papa*, Linn.); certain *Cuculidae* (*Piaiya* sp., *Crotophaga* sp.), and species beyond consideration because of their tiny bodies, such as the *Trochilidae* and many *Pipridae*.

Most important of the birds eaten is the pampa ostrich (*Rhea macrorhyncha*, Sclater). There follow the sariema (*Cariama cristata*, Linn.); such fowls as the jacú (*Penelope* sp.); the araeuã (*Ortalis guttata*, Spix), which is relatively abundant in old plantations; various inambú species (*Tinamus* sp., *Crypturus* sp.); partridges (*Rhynchotus rufescens*, Temm.); wild pigeons (*Columba* sp.; *Leptoptila* sp.); and parrots. Red araras are virtually unattainable here at present, so [237] that the chief material for feathered decoration is lacking, for want of which the Indians in part substitute kerchiefs. Again and again they implored me to bring them arara feathers from the Apinayé, who in this respect are somewhat better off. Aquatic birds are wholly lacking, except for a species of heron (*Tigrisoma* sp.) [857] and a waterfowl (*Aramides* sp.). Small birds are hunted only by boys, who use arrows with a knobbed tip or with a cross of little rods (pl. 16, *c*, *d*).

The Timbira do not eat tailless amphibians and look with contempt upon the Guajajára for eating at least three species. On the other hand, they neither avoid large lizards (*Iguana* sp.; *Tupinambis* sp.) nor crocodiles and nonvenomous snakes. The Rąmkõ'kamekra offered me the flesh of the sucurijú (*Eunectes murinus*), the giboya (Boa constrictor), and the caninana (*Phrynonax sulphureus*). Land tortoises (*Testudo tabulata*) and a small water tortoise (*Emys* sp.?), which is taken with hook and line, are highly prized.

Women, as noted, eat head lice, though these naturally do not rank as food or as a delicacy. The Indians said they did not know themselves why they ate them, seeing that they are tasteless. Possibly it is "by way of punishment"; that was the reason given me among the Kaingang, whom I would see picking ticks off their bodies, crushing them with their teeth, and then expectorating them. Occasionally the Canella also consume the fat, white beetle larvae found in the kernels of palm nuts—when they do not prefer using them as a hair cosmetic. However, they do

[39] Pohl, Reise, 2:200.

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not crave these larvae so passionately as many Guaraní, let alone Kaingang, who fill thick bamboo tubes with them. I have never seen Timbira eating grasshoppers, ants, or any other insects besides those mentioned above.

Weapons.—The principal Timbira weapon is the bow, kuhẽ′ (pl. 15, *b*) nowadays receding with the spread of muzzle-loaders, but still predominantly used even by the Rąmkõ′kamekra, who own probably more firearms than the other steppe Timbira. The bow is of pau d'arco (*Tecoma* sp.), more rarely of piquiá (*Caryocar* sp.), or pau rôxo wood. Its size diminishes with its importance in warfare and hunting. Among the Western Gaviões, who lack guns and still guard their woods with the bow, it attains the enormous length of 254 cm.; the private collection of Estevão de Oliveira contains a specimen. These bows thus rank third for length among the South American types known to me, being surpassed only by the equivalents from the Bakairí of the Xingú headwaters and from the Kaingang of São Paulo. The "Bugre" (Botocudo of Sta. Catharina) bows pronounced as the longest by Krieksberg[28] are thus far inferior, being only 230 cm. long; and so far as my experience goes those of the Sirionó of lower Bolivia, to which some assign the first place, never exceed 216 cm. The maximum measurements among the Eastern Gaviões (Pųkóbye), Krĩkatí, Krahõ′, and Rąmkõ′kamekra) are, respectively: 192, 191, 188, 183 cm.[29]

Common as is a round cross section among the Krahõ′, it is limited to the toy bows of little boys among the Rąmkõ′kamekra, and these may also be elliptical. Otherwise the Timbira—the Kre'pų′mkateye less than the rest—uniformly flatten the string side; a ceremonial Rąmkõ′kamekra specimen has approximately oval cross section.

The tip of the Rąmkõ′kamekra bow, around which they wind the taut end of the string, generally, though not always, has for its support a pad of cordage (pl. 15, *c*). Among the other tribes the tip is slightly set off on the outside. To produce tension they loosen the corded loop from the other end, shorten the string by vigorous twisting, bend the bow with the knee, and push the end again over the rather blunt tip. The bowstring, kuhẽ̃ẽ̃, is of tucum fiber; I have not seen the cotton form ascribed by Snethlage to "the northern tribes."

The hunting arrows of the Timbira are of camayuva cane (*Guadua* sp.) and generally as long as the bow or but slightly shorter (pl. 16, *f*). Solely the Western Gaviões, who require arrows corresponding in length to their gigantic bows, use only canna braba (*Gynerium saccharoides*), obviously because the thickness of the camayuva cane is not proportionate to the requisite length. This tribe tips arrows with huge, two-edged, unserrated bamboo points up to 35 cm. long and 4 cm. wide, which are glued and tied to a wooden foreshaft. Others have a dentate wooden point. Among the other Eastern Timbira I was too late to see arrows with bamboo knives, which are presumably above all for use in warfare. The typical arrow of the Eastern Timbira (like the Apinayé and Šerénte form) altogether lacks a specially mounted point, the end of the camayuva shaft being itself shaped into a point by unilateral beveling. This is the customary hunting arrow of all steppe Timbira, not (as Snethlage states) a mere weapon for practice. The Krĩkatí, Pųkóbye, Kre'pų′mkateye, and Rąmkõ′kamekra have arrows with an inserted wooden foreshaft supporting a flat bone tip, which is put on so that there is a laterally projecting blunt barb (pl. 16, *g*). The last-named people more frequently substitute for the bone point one of iron wire (pl. 16, *h*) or a little barblike rod of hard wood.

[28] In Buschan, Illustrierte Völkerkunde, 283, 284.

[29] Wied-Neuwied, Reise, v. 2, 23, found a "Patachos" bow "8 Fuss 9½ Zoll englisch." *Editor.*

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Juçára (*Euterpe* sp.)	Piquy (*Caryocar* sp.)
Bacaba (*Oenocarpus* sp.)	Mocajuba (*Acrocomia* sp.)
Sapucaia (*Lecythis* sp.)	Mangaba (*Hancornia* sp.)
Curiti (?)	Cajú (*Anacardium* sp.)
Guabiroba	Araçá (*Psidium* sp.)
Bacury (*Platonia* sp.)	Côco = babassu (*Orbignia* sp.)
Puçá	

Strangely enough, he omits the palm that is one of the most, if not the most, important of species for the Timbira, namely, the burity (*Mauritia flexuosa*).

Snethlage thus supplements the list:[285]

Piassava (*Attalea* sp.)	Paty (*Astrocaryum* sp.)
Catulé (*Cocos comosa*)	Muricy (*Brytonima* sp.)
(Various *Astrocaryas*)	

Of all the species named only four are really important in supplying a sufficiency of food during part of the year, viz., the four palms of the *galeria* woods—juçára, bacaba, babassu, and burity.

From the fleshy layer of the seeds of the juçára, bacaba, and burity fruits the Indians prepare more or less viscid beverages, which are very nutritious by reason of their fatty content. They are strained through little round strainers, plaited from uarumã strips, whose ends are twisted together into a peripheral pad (pl. 20, *c*). The babassu yields for food not only its strongly oleaginous seeds, but also the indwelling larvae of *Bruchus nucleorum*,[286] which we have noted as used for hair pomade. The seeds are pounded in a mortar, and the pulp is rinsed with water, whence there evolves a fatty, white juice, which is poured through the above-mentioned strainer.

Anciently tribes waged war over stands of babassu, as in the fighting between the Krahõ′ and the Põrekamekra noted by Pohl.[287] It was obviously this palm whose ownership was at stake; for it is especially common on the left bank of the Tocantins.

Ribeiro mentions the mocajuba trunk as a source of food and drink, a use I have never myself noted. On the other hand, the palmitos, leaf shoots, of the juçara and especially of the anajá (*Maximiliana regia*) are occasionally consumed even today.

In times of dearth the Ramkõ′kamekra prepare a kind of flour from the root of the patioba (*Caladium* sp.; Timbira: mriti), which grows in the water of creeks and swamps.

As an article of diet, wild honey is equally insignificant. Snethlage describes the procedure of hacking it out of the trees and pouring it into gourd bottles. I have never seen beehives in Timbira villages.

Except for honey, the gathering of wild food is principally a feminine task; even nowadays women and girls are rather addicted to it. Marching through the steppe, they glance all around, almost instinctively scouring the country, and collect whatever comes near them into a gourd bowl, which they generally take along on such trips. Sometimes a large bevy of girls, especially young ones, jointly roam over the steppe for days in quest of fruits. In order not to miss their customary dances every night, they take a precentor with them, but otherwise decline a male escort and would manhandle any lad who should thrust his company upon them. During one of these marches, in 1933, I observed the following remarkable terminal performance.

During the last period of seclusion of the initiation festival held at the time a dozen girls with the precentor Kaukré and his wife marched about forty kilometers

[285] Nordostbras. Ind., 160.
[286] Cf. Frões Abreu, Terra das Palmeiras, 54.
[287] Pohl, 2:137.